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FARM LABOR

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FLORIDA

The number of workers paid by farmers and agricultural services totaled 82,000 for the week of April 9 through 15. Farmers hired 70,000 workers compared with 60,000 in January 2000 and 54,000 in April 1999. Agricultural services hired 12,000 compared with 16,000 last quarter and 9,000 a year ago. Growers planted field corn, cotton and peanuts, and transplanted tobacco during the survey week. Ranchers fed supplemental hay due to poor pasture conditions while workers irrigated citrus and vegetable acreage. Harvesting of Valencias, Temples, Honey tangerines and grapefruit for fresh market was active. Grove caretakers cut cover crops, sprayed and topped trees. Vegetable

harvesting continued. Blueberry picking started in the West Central area. Nursery workers prepared for the Mother's Day demand.

The April 2000 all hired workers wage rate averaged \$8.53 per hour, two percent above the \$8.34 per hour paid last quarter and four percent above the \$8.20 paid last year. Farmers paid an average of \$8.54 per hour, 26 cents above the \$8.28 paid last quarter and 36 cents more than the \$8.18 paid last year. Agricultural services paid workers an average of \$8.50 per hour compared with \$8.60 paid last quarter and \$8.30 paid last year.

UNITED STATES

There were 1.05 million hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches the week of April 9-15, 2000, up 2 percent from a year ago. There were 830,000 workers hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 217,000 workers. Migrant workers accounted for 8.8 percent of the April hired workforce compared with 8.7 percent last year.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage rate of \$8.12 per hour during the April 2000 survey week, up 29 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$7.58 per hour, up 35 cents from last April. Livestock workers earned \$7.56 per hour compared with \$7.39 a year earlier. The Field and Livestock worker combined wage rate was up 31 cents from last year.

Number of hours worked averaged 40.4 hours for hired workers during the survey week compared with 39.5 hours a year ago.

The largest increases in number of hired farm workers over last year occurred in the Florida, Northern Plains (North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas), Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas), Mountain II (Colorado, Nevada, and Utah), and Corn Belt I (Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio) regions. In the Northern Plains, corn planting was active in most of the region and producers were busy moving cattle to summer ranges. In the Southern Plains, land preparation and corn, soybean, and sorghum plantings were active. The main farming activities in Corn Belt I included corn and some soybean plantings, applying fertilizer and herbicides, purchasing supplies, and preparing equipment. Calving and lambing were also active.

The largest decreases in number of hired farm workers

from a year ago were in the Appalachian II (Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia), Mountain III (Arizona and New Mexico), and California regions. Showers across most of the Appalachian II region, coupled with colder than normal temperatures, limited fieldwork. In Mountain III, above normal temperatures helped accelerate crop development versus a year ago. In California, scattered showers were reported in northern and central areas of the State. Four weeks of favorably dry and often warm weather helped advance fieldwork and initial summer crop planting activity.

Hired farm worker wage rates were above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in the Pacific (Oregon and Washington), Lake (Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin) and Appalachian II regions. The higher wages were generally attributable to fewer seasonal workers reported on the payroll during the survey week in the Pacific and Appalachian II regions. In the Lake region, farmers reported fewer field hours worked for salaried workers which helped contribute to the increase from last year.

Regions showing declines in the hired farm worker wage rates were Mountain III, Mountain II (Colorado, Nevada, and Utah), Corn Belt II (Iowa and Missouri), Appalachian I (North Carolina and Virginia), and Hawaii. Slight declines of hired wage rates in these regions generally occurred due to an increase in field worker hours reported in each region.

REVISIONS: The January 2000 hired workers estimates were revised for the U.S. and California. These revisions were based on additional information received in California as part of the ongoing Federal, State cooperative program.

Table 1 -- Florida agricultural workers, number of workers, wage rates, and hours worked, April 9 - 15, 2000, with comparisons

Employer, Year, and survey week		Hired by farm operators						
		Number of workers			Hours Worked Per Week	Wages Paid by Type of Work		
		All	Expected to work			All	Field	Livestock
			150 days or more	149 days or less				
HIRED BY FARMERS								
2000		Thousands			Hours	Dollars Per Hour ^{1/}		
	April 9 - 15	70.0	62.0	8.0	40.2	8.54	7.70	7.80
	January 9 - 15	60.0	48.0	12.0	41.9	8.28	7.40	7.50
1999								
	October 10 - 16	58.0	47.0	11.0	38.8	8.05	7.05	7.00
	July 11 - 17	45.0	40.0	5.0	39.7	8.32	7.25	7.30
	April 11 - 17	54.0	46.0	8.0	41.1	8.18	7.40	6.90
	January 10 - 16	55.0	48.0	7.0	39.1	8.31	7.35	7.00
1998								
	October 11 - 17	47.0	42.0	5.0	43.0	7.82	7.10	7.30
	July 12 - 18	45.0	40.0	5.0	41.5	8.08	7.25	6.90
	April 12 - 18	57.0	43.0	14.0	39.7	7.57	6.75	7.20
HIRED BY AGRICULTURAL SERVICES								
2000								
	April 9 - 15	12.0			36.5	8.50		
	January 9 - 15	16.0			36.5	8.60		
1999								
	October 10 - 16	5.0			32.0	8.65		
	July 11 - 17	3.0			45.0	8.85		
	April 11 - 17	9.0			38.0	8.30		
	January 10 - 16	12.0			35.0	8.50		
1998								
	October 11 - 17	6.0			30.0	8.05		
	July 12 - 18	5.0			32.0	8.60		
	April 12 - 18	13.0			40.0	8.40		
HIRED BY BOTH FARMERS & AGRICULTURAL SERVICES								
2000								
	April 9 - 15	82.0				8.53		
	January 9 - 15	76.0				8.34		
1999								
	October 10 - 16	63.0				8.09		
	July 11 - 17	48.0				8.36		
	April 11 - 17	63.0				8.20		
	January 10 - 16	67.0				8.34		
1998								
	October 11 - 17	53.0				7.84		
	July 12 - 18	50.0				8.12		
	April 12 - 18	70.0				7.73		

^{1/} Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

**Table 2 -- Number of workers hired by farmers, wage rates, and hours worked,
selected States, April 9 - 15, 2000, with comparisons ^{1/}**

Item	Florida	California	Texas & Oklahoma	Arizona & New Mexico	Hawaii	United States ^{2/}
Thousands						
All hired workers						
April 9 - 15, 2000	70	229	63	15	7	830
January 9 - 15, 2000	60	*204	44	20	8	*685
April 11 - 17, 1999	54	286	51	20	7	867
Expected to work						
150 days or less						
April 9 - 15, 2000	62	179	41	13	6	628
January 9 - 15, 2000	48	*152	32	18	7	*540
April 11 - 17, 1999	46	240	37	17	6	670
149 days or less						
April 9 - 15, 2000	8	50	22	2	1	202
January 9 - 15, 2000	12	*52	12	2	1	*145
April 11 - 17, 1999	8	46	14	3	1	197
Dollars per hour ^{3/}						
All hired worker wage rate						
April 9 - 15, 2000	8.54	8.38	7.47	7.30	10.58	8.12
January 9 - 15, 2000	8.28	*7.94	7.52	7.22	10.40	*8.10
April 11 - 17, 1999	8.18	8.00	7.18	7.65	10.81	7.83
Wages by type of worker						
Field & Livestock						
April 9 - 15, 2000	7.71	7.78	7.12	6.68	9.14	7.58
January 9 - 15, 2000	7.41	*7.12	7.08	6.57	8.90	*7.37
April 11 - 17, 1999	7.37	7.31	6.51	6.96	9.38	7.27
Field						
April 9 - 15, 2000	7.70	7.75	6.90	6.71	9.19	7.58
January 9 - 15, 2000	7.40	*7.02	7.06	6.51	8.96	*7.25
April 11 - 17, 1999	7.40	7.20	6.41	6.77	9.45	7.23
Livestock						
April 9 - 15, 2000	7.80	8.15	7.48	6.53	^{4/}	7.56
January 9 - 15, 2000	7.50	*8.00	7.10	6.83	^{4/}	*7.61
April 11 - 17, 1999	6.90	8.29	6.66	7.58	^{4/}	7.39
Average hours per week						
Hours worked by all hired workers						
April 9 - 15, 2000	40.2	44.7	37.4	50.7	37.1	40.4
January 9 - 15, 2000	41.9	*42.7	37.6	43.5	36.6	*38.4
April 11 - 17, 1999	41.1	40.5	36.1	44.1	37.3	39.5

^{1/} Excludes Agricultural Service workers. ^{2/} United States excludes Alaska. ^{3/} Value of any perquisites provided are not included in wage rates. ^{4/} Insufficient data for this category; included in all hired wages. *Revised.

RELIABILITY OF FARM LABOR ESTIMATES

Survey Procedures: These data were collected by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) during the last two weeks of April using sampling procedures to ensure every employer of agricultural workers had a chance of being selected.

Two samples of farm operators are selected. First, NASS maintains a list of farms that hire farm workers. Farms on this list are classified by size and type. Those expected to employ large numbers of workers are selected with greater frequency than those hiring few or no workers. A second sample consists of segments of land scientifically selected from an area sampling frame. Each June, highly trained interviewers locate each selected land segment and identify every farm operating land within the sample segment's boundaries. The names of farms found in these area segments are matched against the NASS list of farms; those not found on the list are included in the labor survey sample to represent all farms. This methodology is known as multiple frame sampling, with an area sample used to measure the incompleteness of the list. Additionally, a list of agricultural service firms was sampled in California and Florida. The survey reference week was April 9-15, 2000.

Reliability: Two types of errors, sampling and nonsampling, are possible in an estimate based on a sample survey. Both types affect the "precision" of the estimates.

Sampling error occurs because a complete census is not taken. The sampling error measures the variation in estimates from the average of all possible samples. An estimate of 100 with a sampling error of 1 would mean that chances are 19 out of 20 that the estimates from all possible samples averaged together would

be between 98 and 102; which is the survey estimate, plus or minus two times the sampling error. The sampling error expressed as a percent of the estimate is called the relative sampling error. The relative sampling error for number of hired workers at the U.S. level was 3.4 percent. The relative sampling error for the number of hired workers generally ranged between 7 and 24 percent at the regional level. The U.S. all hired farm worker wage rate had a relative sampling error of 1.0 percent. The relative sampling error was 1.0 percent for the combined field and livestock worker wage rate. Relative sampling errors for the all hired farm worker wage rate generally ranged between 2 and 6 percent at the regional levels. Relative sampling errors for wage rates published by type of farm and economic class of farm ranged between 2 and 17 percent at the regional level.

Nonsampling errors can occur in a complete census as well as in sample surveys. They are caused by the inability to obtain correct information from each operation sampled, differences in interpreting questions or definitions, and mistakes in editing, coding, or processing the data. Special efforts are taken at each step of the survey to minimize nonsampling errors.

Revision Policy: Farm labor information is subject to revision the next time the information is published for the year after the original publication date. The basis for revision must be supported by additional data that directly affect the level of the estimate. Worker numbers and wage rates for April 1999 and January 2000 are subject to revision with this report. Revisions were made and previous data are reprinted in this report for your information.